



Dahagram-Angorpota Sangram Committee forms a human chain in front of the High Court in the city yesterday protesting violation of Tin Bigha corridor agreement by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF).

Keep Tin Bigha corridor open round the clock

Enclave residents demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents of Dahagram-Angorpota enclave yesterday called on the government to take immediate measures to keep the Tin Bigha corridor open round the clock for their movement.

They also demanded electrification of the area, healthcare and land registration facilities, bank loan for agricultural purposes and construction of a bridge on Shankua river.

Leaders of Dahagram-Angorpota Sangram Committee, a platform for 15,000 inhabitants of the enclave in Lalmonirhat, placed

the demands at a press conference in the city.

The inhabitants are being denied their basic rights, said Md Saiful Islam, chairman of Dahagram-Angorpota Union.

Since September 2, the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) have not been allowing the residents of the enclave to pass through the corridor with cattle and goods, he said.

"Our lives and property have become insecure due to tension in the border areas", he said. "We appeal to the government to take immediate steps to restore normal situation."

Depicting their suffering in the enclave, Saiful Islam said there is a hospital building but no doctor and medicines.

Tamiz Alam read out a written statement at the press conference attended by Committee General Secretary Golam Mostafa, Organising Secretary Shafiqul Alam Bablu, Advisor Ershad Hossain Shaju, Motahar Hossain and Mizanur Rahman.

Earlier, they also formed a human chain in front of the Supreme Court to press home their demands.



Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) and Jatiya Oikya Mancha stage a demonstration at Bahadur Shah Park in the city yesterday demanding electoral reforms and resignation of the chief election commissioner.

Cop action on opposition leaders, workers condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations yesterday condemned the unprecedented police atrocities on the leaders and workers of the 14-party opposition combine during their Prime Minister's Office (PMO) siege program on Tuesday.

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) demanded exemplary punishment to all the responsible police officials including Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Kohinur Miah and compensation and treatment for the victims.

After an urgent meeting at the Shahid Abdul Ahad Hall to protest police intervention and physical assault on political leaders and workers during their observance of constitutionally recognised political activities, the SCBA asked the government not to use the law enforcers as its tool to meet the party interest.

Ekkattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee denounced the brutal police attack on the Awami League leaders and activists and accused Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of bringing the activities of Proshika, one of the largest voluntary organisations in the country, to a halt.

"The prime minister tried to satisfy her fundamentalist ally by conducting such blanket arrest on Proshika officials," a committee press release said, adding that she will be brought for trial for all the incidents of killing, torture, arrest without warrant and attacks.

President of the organisation's advisory council Prof Kabir Chowdhury, acting president of the central executive committee and eminent writer Shahriar Kabir and General Secretary Kazi Mukul were the signatories of the press release.

Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, Ain O Shalish Kendro, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services trust (BLAST), Nijera Kori, Bangladesh Nari Progoti Songho, Pakkhik Ananya and IED jointly condemned the barbaric police attack on female activists of 14-party line-up.

"The merciless and brutal attack on female political activists is an incident of utter disgrace", the leaders of the organisations said in a statement.

The government, home ministry, and police administration should establish the image of the police as the servant of the state, they said.

They also urged newspapers to follow the ethics of journalism in case of publishing the ghastly photographs of police action on women.

The organisations demanded proper investigation into the police atrocities and exemplary punishment of the accused.

Hannan new envoy to Oman

UNB, Dhaka

The government has appointed M Abdul Hannan, currently serving as Deputy High Commissioner, Bangladesh, as the Ambassador to Oman.

M Abdul Hannan, who joined the BCS (Foreign Affairs) cadre in 1986, served in different significant posts in home and abroad, said an official release yesterday.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

'Official Secrets Act, repression of journalists major obstacles'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Media experts at a seminar yesterday said Official Secrets Act, high tariff on newsprint and frequent repression of journalists are the main obstacles to ensuring freedom of the press and access to information.

They also urged the government to formulate a comprehensive 'Freedom of information act' and repeal all the restrictive laws in order to boost the growth of the media, which can help make the country prosperous.

Dhaka University Journalists' Association (Duja) organised the seminar on 'Growth of the media in Bangladesh: Prospects and reality'

at the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) of Dhaka University. DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz inaugurated the seminar.

Presenting the keynote paper, Robaet Ferdous, associate professor of Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, DU, said nowadays journalists, especially those working outside the capital, are facing more repression than they have faced any time in the past.

The government is also curbing the freedom of the media and journalists through introduction of new laws and decree or amendment of laws, he said.

"Though newspapers are changing their make-up and get-up

rapidly competing with each other, we don't see any healthy competition to improve the quality of news and editorial. Newspapers have, so far, failed to bring new dimension to investigative or interpretative reporting, editorial, post-editorial and feature," Robaet observed.

In the coming days, he said, the print media will face survival crisis due to increased importance of electronic media and web version of newspaper and blogs and other alternative electronic media will replace newspaper.

Addressing the seminar as the chief guest, Health Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said the media owners, not the government, are mostly responsi-

ble for curbing the freedom of the media and journalists.

The media are now enjoying more freedom than any time in the past, he said.

Pro-VC Prof AFM Yusuf Haider, former chair of Department of Mass Communication and Journalism Prof Dr Golam Rahman, The Bangladesh Observer Editor Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, the Amar Desh Editor Amanullah Kabir and BSS Managing Editor and Chief Editor Gazul Hasan Khan also spoke.

Duja President Mustak Ahmed Masud presided over the seminar moderated by General Secretary Imamul Haq Shamim.



Health Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain speaks at a seminar on 'Growth of the media in Bangladesh: Prospects and reality' as the chief guest at the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) of Dhaka University yesterday.